



OFFICE OF THE SHERIFF CITY AND COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO

1 DR. CARLTON B. GOODLETT PLACE
ROOM 456, CITY HALL
SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA 94102



**PAUL MIYAMOTO
SHERIFF**

**For Immediate Release
March 17, 2021
Contact: Nancy Crowley, 415-238-5488**

Press Release

ONE YEAR LATER, SHERIFF MIYAMOTO, MAYOR BREED AND DRS. COLFAX AND PRATT REFLECT ON LIVE-SAVING JAIL PROTOCOLS DURING PANDEMIC

No deaths, hospitalizations or COVID outbreaks have occurred among incarcerated population in San Francisco County Jail since pandemic began; vaccinations now being offered to jail population

San Francisco, CA -- Sheriff Paul Miyamoto, Mayor London Breed, Dr. Grant Colfax and Dr. Lisa Pratt announced today that Jail Health Services has begun offering COVID-19 vaccinations to people in custody at San Francisco County Jail under the City's expanded eligibility guidelines. To date, 418 justice-involved people have received a COVID-19 vaccination.

"Vaccinations stop severe illness and death from COVID-19," said Sheriff Miyamoto. "Helping the people in our custody and care get vaccinated keeps them healthy and in turn, prevents COVID-19 spread among the community."

Since the onset of the pandemic, the collaboration among the San Francisco Sheriff's Office, Jail Health Services and the City's justice partners, has prevented death, hospitalizations and COVID outbreaks among San Francisco's incarcerated population.

"Throughout the last year, we have worked incredibly hard to prevent COVID outbreaks everywhere in our city, especially in our high-risk congregate settings," said Mayor Breed. I want to recognize Sheriff Miyamoto and Dr. Colfax and the Department of Public Health for their work to prevent any major outbreaks and any deaths during the last year in our justice system. This is a demonstration of how the strong collaboration between our City departments, from leadership down to line staff, has helped save lives during this pandemic."

"Our interventions in the early stages of our response, such as providing masks and limiting jail personnel to essential workers have paid off and have saved the lives," said Dr. Grant Colfax, Director of Health. "I am proud that we have experienced no COVID-19 outbreaks among incarcerated people at the San Francisco County Jail and have now begun to offer vaccinations to the people in custody."

This experience stands in stark contrast to national trends where state and federal prisons reported [51 percent more deaths](#) from COVID than the mortality rates for individuals who share common demographics on the outside.

Less than a month after the City's first shelter-in-place order on March 17, 2020, Jail Health Services began testing all new arrestees at booking. If they remained in custody, strict isolation and quarantine protocols were implemented to prevent the virus from spreading inside the jails. New health and safety protocols required masks, frequent hand washing and physical distancing among both the justice-involved population and staff.

The City's justice partners including the Superior Courts, District Attorney, Public Defender and the Sheriff worked to safely lower the jail population to reduce the risk of COVID and create physical distance in the jails among the incarcerated population.

With a lower jail population, Sheriff Miyamoto closed the seismically unsafe County Jail #4 at the Hall of Justice on September 4, 2020. The Sheriff's Office continues to operate County Jail #2 at 425 - 7th St., County Jail #3 in San Bruno and the Intake and Release Center located in the County Jail #2 building.

"While these actions may seem obvious in retrospect, they were not," said San Francisco Paul Miyamoto. "It required trust in each other's area of expertise as well as wholesale policy changes overnight affecting almost every aspect of jail operations. I am grateful to and inspired by my team. I also thank Dr. Lisa Pratt, Jail Health Services and our justice partners for their dedication to our mutual goal, keeping people healthy and safe."

"Working with the Sheriff's staff, we have listened to and learned from each other," said Dr. Pratt, Director of Jail Health Services, a section of the Department of Public Health. "I am also appreciative of how engaged our justice partners have been throughout this year. Our shared purpose drives our collaboration. ``

Both Sheriff Miyamoto and Dr. Pratt say City leadership set the tone for the proactive measures they have taken inside the jail to prevent the spread of COVID. "Having Mayor Breed and Dr. Colfax consistently communicate and reinforce critical COVID health and safety messages gives us the space, support and flexibility to implement operational changes protecting the jail population," said Sheriff Miyamoto.

"No leader wants to tell people to stay home," said Dr. Pratt. "One year later, we are safer in San Francisco and inside the jails because Mayor Breed and Dr. Colfax did just that. They made the difficult decisions, which informed our decisions at the next level of protecting public health," said Dr. Pratt.

Led by elected Sheriff Paul Miyamoto, the San Francisco Sheriff's Office serves the people of San Francisco by administering the county jails, providing security for the Superior Court and other high-profile public buildings, and performing civil court orders.

Jail Health Services is a section of the San Francisco Health Network of the Department of Public Health that is dedicated to the health care of incarcerated adults in San Francisco. Jail Health Services employs 162 nurses, nurse practitioners, doctors, behavioral health clinicians, dentists and support staff.